

REMARKS

Prior to the further examination of this case on the merits, the above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 21-36 had been previously allowed. Claims 21 and 31 are being amended to correct formal errors and to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject invention. In addition, new claims 37-51 are hereby submitted for consideration.

All amendments to the application are fully supported therein. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Information Disclosure statement

Kumar et al. (US 2003/131182) and Bates et al. (US 6,977,927) are being submitted for consideration. Consideration of these references is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for holding that claims 21-36 are allowed upon the Examiner's amendments of claims 21, 26, 27, 29, and 31. However, Applicants hereby request entry of the above-outlined amendments to claims 21 and 31 and of new claims 37-51, because Applicants disagree with the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance as set forth in the Notice of Allowance.

One of the features of the above referenced claims is changing a relationship between an upper logical unit and a lower (inner) logical unit in a storage device in response to an instruction from an external device such as a computer. For example, a relationship between the first upper logical unit and a first lower logical unit is changed to a relationship between the first upper logical unit and a second lower logical unit in response to an instruction from an external device such as a computer. The prior art references fail to teach or suggest this feature. Applicants will also point out that the reasons for the allowability of the above referenced claims are not limited to the reasons offered by the Examiner.

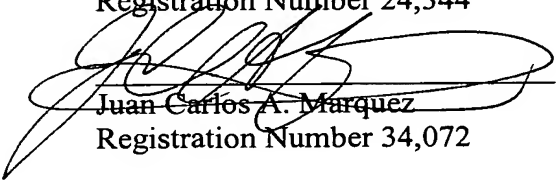
Conclusion

In view of all the above, Applicants respectfully submit that certain clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art references upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely. These differences are more than sufficient that the present invention as now claimed would not have been anticipated nor rendered obvious given the prior art. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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